

09th September, 2024

Dear Veterans, Families, and Community Members,

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Report

Today marks the culmination of a long and difficult journey. For many veterans and their families, both directly and indirectly affected, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide brings with it challenges that we must face together.

This morning, the **Final Report** of the Royal Commission was handed to the Governor-General and is expected to be tabled in Parliament later today. We must remain mindful that the findings and recommendations of this report could trigger various responses as we await the Government's official reaction and subsequent actions.

The **Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report** represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the services provided to our veteran community. It is crucial that we seize this opportunity to drive down the rate of suicide among current and former ADF personnel. The report acknowledges that many veterans have been let down in the past, and we must commit ourselves to change.

At our Sub-Branch, we are already working diligently to support our veteran community by:

- Conducting welfare checks for all members,
- Investigating on, and following up on welfare enquiries related to food relief, financial hardship, emergency accommodation, and mental health support.
- Providing a safe and welcoming venue for veterans and the veteran community,
- Facilitating a highly active Health and Well-Being Program, with many activities linked to **RSL Active**,
- Engaging through our committed **Welfare Committee, Welfare Advocate, Health and Well-Being Committee**, and **Veterans Activities Officer**,
- Actively advancing the development of our **Veterans' and Veterans' Families Hub**, with final signatures being applied to a proposal that includes **RSL Victoria, BDRSL, Bendigo Legacy Club**, and the **Vietnam Veterans Association Bendigo Sub-Branch**.

We will continue to seek further opportunities and improvements in line with the 122 recommendations from the Royal Commission's Final Report.

In the coming days, there may be extensive media coverage of the report. I would like to remind everyone of the support services available to you and others in the veteran community:

- **Bendigo District RSL Sub-Branch:** Call (03) 5442 2950 and press 2 for Veteran Support.
- **Veteran Central (VetCen):** Call 1300 MILVET (1300 645 838) or email veterancentral@rslvic.com.au for assistance connecting veterans and their families to government, veteran, and community support services.
- **Veterans Counselling Services Veterans Centre:** Call 0417 511 914 www.veteranscounselling.com.au

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need help or support.

Stay safe,

Glenn Ludeman

President



RSL Sub-Branch Office

P (03) 5443 4013
E rsl@bendigorsl.com.au

Welfare Enquiries

P (03) 5443 4013
E welfare@bendigorsl.com.au

Health & Wellbeing Officer

P (03) 5442 2950
E healthwellbeing@bendigorsl.com.au



RSL Venue & Enquiries

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